

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 20, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Bueno, Mrs. Kuechler, Mrs. Powers, Mr. Veitch, Mrs. McKenna.
Mr. Monroe

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Baldwin, Mrs. Kohler, Mrs. Potter, Mr. Kulak, Ms. Bouchard

STAFF ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:31p.m.

The Chair informed the audience that the meeting was being recorded for public access. The Chair also explained the use of Zoom for this particular meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance. **The Chair attempted to play a recorded version of the pledge. Due to technical difficulties, it did not play. **

Roll Call: Powers, Veitch, Bueno, McKenna, Kuechler, Monroe

Motion made by Ms. Kuechler, seconded by Ms. Powers to approve the minutes from May 6, 2020. Minutes were approved, 5-0, unanimously.

Student Advisory

Students did not attend the meeting. Therefore, there wasn't an advisory report.

Public Comment

Mr. Monroe stated that everyone can speak, but they will be limited to 2 minutes. He asked that everyone maintain decorum and respect. He also asked that they send a chat or raise their hand if they would like to speak. Since there was no response, there was no Public Comment.

Update regarding FHS Class of 2020

Dr. Baldwin stated that he commends the staff and class on all their hard work. The school community is also involved in the big week ahead for the senior Class of 2020.

Mr. Kulak stated that he is excited for the 31st for the kids. It will be special for them. He thanks the Acushnet and Fairhaven Police and Fire Departments for their support and efforts. The graduation processional will start at Ford Middle School and proceed on a 17-mile journey through Acushnet into Fairhaven, passing by several meaningful points. The processional will end at Hastings Middle School with students driving up to Fairhaven High School in groups to receive their diplomas. Normal speeches will be prerecorded by Mr. Furtado. This will be broadcast in Fairhaven TV and social media platforms. There are also 2 days set up for families to take pictures. Dr. Baldwin asked about the School Committee's role as well as Administration's role at this event. Mr. Kulak stated that everyone can be a part of this event and it will be done safely. Dr. Baldwin commends the work being done as we are making this as close to real as it can be as well as safe as it can be. Ms. Powers stated that she thinks this sounds great. Mr. Bueno stated that what he likes overall is that it shows how impactful the student voice is and how it feels to be a part of a town. Dr. Baldwin is overwhelmed at the amount of support and excitement of the community and the departments.

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Access to Materials

Dr. Baldwin discussed the use of videos of on-site interviews at the schools. The pickups went well and it was done safely and timely. We are working out an evening at all levels to get the belongings to those who could not come to the original pick up dates. Ms. Powers stated that the feedback she gave was positive.

End of Year

Dr. Baldwin stated that we are going to try the best we can to incorporate all the normal end of year activities and celebrations in our schools. He acknowledges everyone's hard work in making this happen.

FY20 Student Transportation

Dr. Baldwin explained what is going on in the Commonwealth. We were advised to pay our out of district tuition as they were providing the remote learning for the student. However, the student was not be transported. The State is advising to pay the transportation contracts in full. However, we are asking to be able to go into negotiations with the transportation vendors. Mrs. Potter has sent letters asking for legitimacy of services. Dr. Baldwin advised that we should be paying a certain amount of what the contract is based on a negotiated legitimized services. Mr. Veitch supports the hard costs for the vendor, however, would like to have Mrs. Potter see what their actual costs were during this time. Mrs. Potter did question if the regular ed transportation provider was seeking out any loans or additional resources. She indicated that the regular ed transportation service assured her that was not the case.

Dr. Baldwin would like to be able to negotiate and come back to the School Committee to get the final acceptance on the amount negotiated. Mr. Monroe agreed that it is best to begin the negotiation so that what is paid is agreed upon and fair.

FY21 Budget Update

Dr. Baldwin began explaining the effect of revenues on the Commonwealth's budget. He explained that they are down. There have been meetings about this and it is still unclear. He stated that we will have to go in to next year without any numbers from the State until July or August. This means that by statute that we will go into July on 1/12th of the budget of this year. Level fund means that it is a level funded budget. Whatever we had for the current year's first month, that is what we have for July 2020. A level service budget is \$643,910 more than what we had this year. That would be the difference if we were going to go through the year with a level funded budget. The Town has used the operational cost to determine what ranges to reduce. If we were to look at 20% of the operational cost, it would be \$962,970. Dr. Baldwin has heard at the state level that we should prepare for it to be higher. We cannot reduce during the school year. We must notify our non-professional teacher status employees of nonrenewal, and then RIFing proposals may be needed. We may have anticipated vacancies that we cannot fill until we know we have the money to fill it. This is a budget reduction with no direction from the state, no set time, and no ideas on what we are walking into next year based on the educational

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program. We must be preventative in nature within the next month. Dr. Baldwin stated that we will have to make budgetary decisions now. Ms. Powers stated her concerns on how this will affect the children. Dr. Baldwin stated that we are talking to legislators and letting them know that we need more resources, not less. Mr. Bueno commented that as long as we follow the mission and putting students first, then the best decisions will be made, even if they are difficult to make. Ms. Kuechler stated that we will have always been able to look at putting the children first and truly looking at all the possible scenarios to make the best decisions. She also stated we will need to get as creative as possible to address this type of cut. Mr. Monroe asked Dr. Baldwin when the state numbers may become more clear. Dr. Baldwin stated that we have to prepare for worst case scenario and hopefully, build it back. Mr. Monroe asked when we could expect some scenarios. Dr. Baldwin said that we should be able to have something for them by the second School Committee meeting in June.

Public Hearing: School Choice

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Motion to adjourn the regular session temporarily to go into public hearing made by Ms. McKenna, seconded by Ms. Powers, approved 5-0, unanimously.

Dr. Baldwin recommended that the Committee vote down School Choice. We have 240 Acushnet students at the high school and we must allow the capacity to remain open for them and the people of Fairhaven. The Chair asked if anyone had any comments to raise their hand or send him a message. No comments were made.

Motion to adjourn public hearing and return to regular session made by Mr. Bueno, seconded by Ms. Kuechler, approved, 5-0, unanimously.

Motion to make Fairhaven Public Schools a School Choice District made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Ms. Powers, declined, 0-5, unanimously.

Motion to award the bid to Westmill Preservation Services of Halifax, MA for the continuation of the Fairhaven High School Wood Window Project made by Ms. Powers, seconded by Ms. McKenna, approved, 5-0, unanimously.

Dr. Baldwin discussed the naming of the new turf field "The Class of 2020 Field". He stated that this class in particular has had weather issues in their junior year, EEE in their senior year, and then their senior year just stopped on March 13th. He feels that this is only fitting to name the new turf field, when funded, The Class of 2020 Field. The Naming/Renaming Committee agrees this is the right thing to do.

Motion to name the proposed new turf field at Fairhaven High School "The Class of 2020 Field" made by Ms. Kuechler, seconded by Ms. McKenna, approved, 5-0, unanimously.

No Executive Session.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Kuechler, seconded by Mr. Veitch, approved, 5-0, unanimously.

Adjourned at 7:51pm



Robert Baldwin, Ed. D
Secretary to the School Committee
Fairhaven Public Schools